opening up of STD services immediately. As per the Guidelines already issued by the Government, the position regarding opening of long distance operation is to be reviewed in 1999.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Telephone Tower at Shahapur in Thane District of Maharashtra

1798. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received a representation for erecting a telephone tower at Shahapur in Thane district of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government; and

(c) by when the work is expected to be started?

THE MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) Yes Sir. The Government have received a representation to erect a Telephone Tower at Shahapur in Thane district of Maharashtra to connect Rural Exchanges of Shahapur Taluka to Taluka Headquarter.

(b) Shahapur Exchanges is already connected with a reliable media of 34 MS. Optical Fibre Media system. The other 7 small rural telephone exchanges at Shahapur are planned to be connected by Optical Fibre Cable Media.

(c) The work planned during 1997-98.

Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh

1799. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY:
DR. MOHAN BABU:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages having Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the number of villages not having Post Offices in the State;

(c) the number of Post Offices proposed to be opened during current year 1996-97; and

(d) by when all villages in the State are likely to be provided with facility of Post Offices?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The number of Villages having Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh is 14753.

(b) The number of Villages not having Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh is 12296.

(c) Five (5) Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices and two (2) Departmental Sub Post Offices have been opened during the current year.

(d) Post Offices are opened as Plan activity subject to availability of resources and fulfilment of norms.

MARR Phones in Andhra Pradesh

1800. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages in Madak, Adilabad, Nizamadad, Warangal and Karimnagar of Andhra Pradesh where MARR phones installed;

(b) the number of MARR phones working, District-wise;

(c) the number of MARR phones removed from villages, district wise, and reasons therefor;

(d) whether any proposal of reinstallation of MARR phones in the above villages; and

(e) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER FOR

COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) The number of villages in which MARR phones are installed are as follows: Medak-606, Adilabad-511, Nizamabad-250, Warangal-262, and Karimnagar-324.

(b) The number of MARR phones working at present, district-wise are Medak-340, Adilabad-81,. Nizamabad-237, Warangal-52, and Karimnagar-237.

(c) The number of MARR phones removed from villages district-wise; Medak-251, Adilabad-400, Nizamabad-2, Warangal-200 and Karimnagar-74. Consequent of burning down of some Village Public telephones in these districts by extremist elements, the MARR equipments were with drawn for safe custody on the advice of the Police authorities of these districts.

(d) No, Sir. Still the Police Authorities are not advising for reinstallation.

(e) Reinstallation shall be done on the advice of Police Authorities of the respective districts.

Default Payment by Basic Services Licence Holders

1801. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a massive revenue short fall to the extent of Rs. 1500 crore during 1996-97 is feared on account of default in payment by basis services licence holders;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed in this regard to deal with the problem?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) and (b) As against the total extimated amount of Rs. 2074.72 crores in the form of Licence Fee, only Rs. 19.20 crores have been received so far. Four of the eight LOI holding companies have filed suit in the Delhi High Court against the encashment of their Earnest Money Bank Guarantees.

(c) The LOI holding companies have raised certain issues relating to Licence and Interconnect which are expected to be resolved shortly.

Facility of Zero Dialing for Calling Cellular Numbers

1802. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to introduce a zero dial access for calling cellular number in all telecom exchanges;

(b) if so, the implications thereof to non-cellular phone subscribers;

(c) whether cellular operation have protected this move;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the move of Government is likely to reduce benefits to phone subscribers; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VERMA): (a) Yes Sir. This facility has so far been introduced by the Department in the 4 metro Districts for calls beyond their service area and is being introduced in other Telecom Circles.

(b) Subscribers not having STD facility cannot access cellular subscribers in another service area.

(c) and (d) Representations received from cellular operators were related to Telecom Circles & were mainly against the tariff fixed by the Department of Telecom for the calls made from fixed to mobile telephones within the service area. In addition, cellular operators have also protested that STD-barred fixed subscribers will not be able to make calls to cellular subscribers.

In order to mitigate the second